

 <b>NORFOLK</b> Department of Police	<b>Administrative General Order - 560: Soft Body Armor</b>		
	Office of Preparation: Strategic Management Division (wdp)		
	<b>CALEA:</b>	41.3.5, 41.3.6	
	<b>VLEPSC:</b>	OPR.01.05	
LEGAL REVIEW DATE:	October 26, 2015	PRESCRIBED DATE:	11/10/15
City Attorney:	Wayne Rieger	City Manager/Director of Public Safety:	Mani
APPROVED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:		[Signature]	

## Purpose

This order provides departmental procedures and regulations for law enforcement officers for proper use, maintenance, periodic inspection, and replacement of soft body armor.

## Policy (CALEA 41.3.5)

It is the policy of the Norfolk Police Department to enhance officer safety through use of body armor. While body armor provides an increased level of personal protection, it is not a substitute for officer safety procedures and training. Officers are to wear or have department issued body armor accessible while working in the capacity of law enforcement officer as mandated in this order. Immediate supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with body armor regulations.

Soft body armor provided to sworn personnel are to meet the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) ballistic standards for protection from the most common threat level facing Norfolk law enforcement officers. Additionally, the Department shall replace worn or damaged soft body armor that does not meet the NIJ standard and implement a replacement schedule to ensure all issued soft body armor meets the NIJ standard.

## Supersedes:

1. G.O. ADM-560, dated May 14, 2009
2. Any previously issued directive conflicting with this order

## Order Contents:

- I. Care and Maintenance
- II. Periodic Inspection
- III. Replacement
- IV. Regulations

## I. Care and Maintenance

Personnel are to follow the manufacturer's care instructions, taking particular attention to the items listed below.

### A. Ballistic Panels

1. Remove the ballistic panels and trauma plate from the carrier.
2. Spot clean ballistic panels with a damp cloth.
3. Do not submerge in water, use bleach or soaps, machine wash, dry clean, or apply solvents, chemical sprays or deodorants. This can weaken the ballistic qualities of the panels.
4. Dry the ballistic panels indoors and away from direct sunlight, never iron. Ultraviolet rays from the sun can weaken the ballistic qualities of the panels.
5. Allow ballistic panels to dry thoroughly before placing them back into the carrier.
6. If the panels are subjected to high amounts of perspiration, remove the panels from the carrier and allow to air dry.

### B. Carriers

1. Remove the ballistic panels and trauma plate from the carrier.
2. Close all Velcro™ and other fasteners. Damage received by not performing this task during the wash and dry cycles may void the vest warranty.
3. Machine wash the carrier in warm water using mild soap or detergent and rinse thoroughly.
4. Do not use bleach, starch, or use fabric softeners.
5. Do not place in a dryer. Allow to air dry hanging or lying flat, never iron.
6. The carrier must be completely dry before inserting the ballistic panels.

### C. Soft body armor shall be stored in the following manner:

1. Clean and dry.
2. Store flat and on top of other equipment.

3. Do not store on the edge, fold, bend, or hang by the straps.
  4. Out of direct sunlight exposure, such as automobiles or areas subjected to temperature extremes (below freezing or above 100°F) in combination with high humidity (50% and above) for extended periods.
- D. Do not make any repairs or alterations to the soft body armor.

## II. Periodic Inspection

- A. It is recommended that all personnel frequently inspect issued soft body armor and report deficiencies or problems to their supervisor to initiate replacement procedures established by G.O. ADM-520: Maintenance of City Owned Property, when appropriate.
- B. Officers shall bring their department issued body armor with them to all firearms training for inspection. The Range Master shall determine if body armor is required for the type of training being conducted.
- C. The Firearms Range shall conduct inspections of body armor during firearms training sessions. Personnel shall present issued soft body armor to an inspector for inspection in two areas:
1. The “dress inspection” shall consist of:
    - a. Examining the garment for proper fit and wear.
    - b. Checking for the correct number of ballistic panels and trauma plate.
    - c. Reviewing proper care instructions.
  2. The “condition inspection” shall consist of:
    - a. Examining the soft body armor for cleanliness and proper care.
    - b. Examining the carrier for damage, such as tears, fraying, and loose seams.
    - c. Examining the ballistic panels for damage, such as fraying, broken filaments, distortions, loose seams, and discoloration from perspiration stains.
- D. The Firearms Range shall submit a report to the Property and Evidence Unit following the completion of the inspection. In addition to reporting all issued soft body armor has been inspected, the report shall also contain the officer’s name, duty assignments, date of inspection, inspector’s name, serial number and date of manufacture and significant comments for each inspected garment.

- E. The report shall also include documentation, attached PD 559, Police Property/Equipment Incident Report, for replacement of armor for individuals whose equipment did not meet departmental standards. The Property and Evidence Unit shall be responsible for sizing according to manufacturer's specifications for procuring replacement equipment.
- F. Ballistic Inspection
  - 1. The Property and Evidence Unit shall provide, when available, carriers and panels of the same type and manufacture as issued equipment, to the Range Master for ballistics testing. These "test" panels shall be generated from equipment returned due to retirement, termination, and normal replacement.
  - 2. The Range Master shall conduct ballistic testing and report results to the Property and Evidence Unit. The results shall be used as a factor to determine normal replacement scheduling.
  - 3. Ballistic testing shall be conducted annually. More frequent testing may be conducted upon request from the Range Master and with permission from the Chief of Police.

### III. Replacement

Soft body armor shall be replaced under the following conditions:

- A. Subsequent to the armor being shot, cut, or otherwise damaged by significant impact.
- B. When the protective qualities are reduced as a result of improper fit.
- C. When the soft body armor fails inspection.
- D. As part of a scheduled departmental replacement plan designed to maintain issued equipment at recommended standards. This includes changes in the most common threat level confronted by Norfolk law enforcement officers.

### IV. Regulations (CALEA 41.3.5, 41.3.6) (VLEPSC OPR.01.05)

- A. Personnel shall wear or keep readily available department issued soft body armor as indicated below.
  - 1. Personnel working in uniform and performing field activities shall wear body armor under their Class A or B uniform.
  - 2. Administrative, Investigations, and Harbor Patrol personnel may, but are not required to wear body armor while at work. It must be readily available for immediate use.

3. Personnel working plainclothes details or high-risk operations shall wear body armor.
4. Personnel working undercover are not required to wear body armor when their immediate supervisor determines it could compromise the operation.

Department issued soft body armor is designed to wear under clothing. However, if the body armor is worn over the uniform or civilian clothes, badge and other identification must be visible.

Definitions:

Field Activities: Duty assignments and/or tasks that place or could reasonably be expected to place officers in situations requiring enforcement rather than administrative or support capacities.

Related Documents:

1. G.O. ADM-320: Dress and Personal Appearance
2. G.O. ADM-520: City Owned Property

Attachments:

- A. PD 559, Police Property/Equipment Incident Report



PD 559

NORFOLK POLICE DEPARTMENT  
POLICE PROPERTY/EQUIPMENT INCIDENT REPORT

Instructions: This form will be completed and submitted via chain of command as soon as practical.

- Original forwarded to Property and Evidence Unit.
- Copy one to be maintained by submitting employee's command.
- Copy two to be forwarded by commanding officer, with approval, to Property and Evidence Unit if immediate property/equipment replacement is necessary.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ **The following City/Department property/equipment was:**

☐ Lost ☐ Damaged ☐ Destroyed or ☐ Stolen (include serial # if known) : \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Circumstances of Incident:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Item entered in NCIC: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown IBR Report Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Division: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To: Chief of Police

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

From: Commanding Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: First Endorsement

- ☐ After a thorough investigation of the above report, I find that this property/equipment  
☐ WAS / ☐ WAS NOT: Lost ☐ Damaged ☐ Destroyed ☐ Stolen, as described above  
and recommend that the employee be ☐ HELD / ☐ NOT HELD responsible for the property/equipment.  
☐ Investigation not complete, but I recommend immediate issuance of replacement property/equipment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Commanding Officer

To: Property and Evidence Unit

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

From: Chief of Police

Subject: Second Endorsement

The reporting employee ☐ is ☐ is not responsible. Replace property/equipment, complete additional reports, and/or adjust personnel records as appropriate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief of Police

RECEIPT: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ The following property/equipment was issued to me by the  
☐ Property and Evidence Unit, or \_\_\_\_\_ Unit

Notes:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Receiving Property/Equipment

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Clerk/Issuing Officer